The critics did not sufficiently appreciate the fact that the very qualities of aggressive energy and self-assertion, which might have led Lord Northcliffe in his role of universal stirrer-up to lay about and prod far and wide, and exasperation of all in authority, might prove a useful stimulus to a nation in an emergency calling for a doubling of its energies. It was an occasion that gave scope to his great powers of organisation and drive. It is the wisdom of successful Government that it should harness powerful but unruly natural elements to some beneficent task. In the event, Lord Northcliffe proved to be a striking success in his new role. Colonel House, who at first had his anxieties when he heard of the appointment, established from the outset of his visit a personal friendship which lasted till Northcliffe's death. In his "Intimate Papers" House says that:—

> "To this task Northcliffe brought interminable energy and complete disregard of the impossible, gilded with never-failing good temper. 'You may rely upon me never to use minatory language,[5] Northcliffe cabled to Mr. Balfour towards the close of his mission. * I have been dealing with these people for thirty years. Nothing can

be gained here by threats, much by flattery and self-ab-negation.' With all his experience in a life well stocked with problems he confessed that he had never confronted a task crammed with so many difficulties. * The task is immense/ he cabled home., * and ever growing. I have never worked so hard before.' . . ."